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UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE COMMITTEE OF GENERAL LITERATURE AND EDUCATION
APPOINTED BY THE SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE.



ST. WINIFREDE'S WELL, HOLYWELL, FLINTSHIRE.

HOLYWELL AND ST. WINIFREDE'S WELL.

AMONG the many interesting objects and natural curiosities which engage the attention of the stranger who visits North Wales, the famous spring at Holywell, best known by its ancient appellation of St. Winifrede's Well, must always be ranked as one of the most attractive.

Holywell, now the second town in North Wales, though a place of great antiquity, was, at the beginning of the last century, but an inconsiderable village. The houses were few, and for the most part thatched, the streets unpaved, and the place destitute of a market. It is now a prosperous and well-built town, with a population of about nine thousand,—the chief support of which are the extensive cotton manufactories, the brass and smelting works, and the mines, this town being the centre of the great lead-mines of Flintshire. The principal of these is that which belongs to the Holywell Level Company, who began here, in 1774, an important mining-project, and, after vast expense and the most untiring perseverance—after cutting a tunnel about a mile long, great part of it through solid rock, they were rewarded by the discovery of a large and uncommonly productive bed of ore. The channel which conducted to this rich vein is now of great service in working it. It unites the advantages of a drain to carry off the water, and of a canal to transport the ore. It is navigated by long narrow boats, impelled along the water by pushing against the sides of the rocky archway, from which a number of shafts have at different places been sent upwards, some after the veins, and some for the admission of air, forming, along with the working of the mines, altogether an object of great curiosity.

The town is pleasantly situated on the slope of a hill, which rises beautifully behind the principal streets, and, from its vicinity to the sea, the walks and drives in the neighbourhood are of the most picturesque description. About a mile to the northward of the town are the ruins of Basingwerk Abbey, of which the wall and some pillars of the refectory are the chief remains. The knights Templars had an elegant chapel here, founded in 1131, by Randle, Earl of Chester.

Before entering upon a description of the Well, as it now exists, we must make our readers acquainted with the ancient legend of St. Winifrede, of whom there is a life, in MS., in the Cottonian Library, of the date of 1100.

In the seventh century lived a virgin of the name of Winifrede, of noble parents, her father, Thevith, being a rich noble, and second man in the kingdom of North Wales, next to the king. At a very early age she was placed under the care of her maternal uncle Beuno, a holy man and a priest. Under his protection she lived with certain other pious maidens, in a small nunnery, erected for her by her father, near the site where the spring now is. Having been seen by Caradoc, Prince of Wales, he was struck by her great beauty, and, finding it impossible to gain her in marriage, he attempted to carry her off by force; she fled towards the church, pursued by the prince, who, on his overtaking her, in the madness of his rage, drew out his sabre and struck off her head. The severed head bounded down the hill, entered the church door, and rolled to the foot of the altar, where St. Beuno was officiating. Where the head rested, a spring of uncommon size burst forth,—a fragrant moss adorned its sides, her blood spotted the stones, which, like the flowers of Adonis, annually commemorate the facts by assuming colours unknown to them at other times. St. Beuno took up the head, and, at his prayers and intercessions, it was united to the

body,—the virgin was restored to life, and lived in the odour of sanctity fifteen years afterwards. Miracles were wrought at her tomb, the waters of the spring proved as sanative as those of the Pool of Bethesda, all the infirmities to which the human body is liable were cured by the use of the waters. The votive crutches, barrows, &c., to this moment remain pendant over the well as so many evidences of those miraculous cures.

Setting aside this fabulous legend, the Well of St. Winifrede is sufficiently remarkable, more so than the celebrated fountain of Vaucluse, near Avignon. At the foot of a steep hill, from an aperture in a rock, rushes forth a torrent of water, which, from its quantity and regularity, is calculated to astonish the ignorant and interest the geologist. Pennant, who resided near this place, says, in his *History of North Wales*, that the quantity of water which issues from this spring is twenty-one tons (which is about eighty-four hogsheads) per minute; it varies very little in wet or dry seasons, and has never been known to freeze. The water is so clear, that though the basin is four feet deep, a pin may be easily perceived lying at the bottom.

The well is surrounded, at certain seasons, by a fragrant moss*, called, by the vulgar, St. Winifrede's hair; but this moss is by no means peculiar to the fountain, the same being found in another spring in Caernarvonshire. It is the *Jungermannia asplenoides* of the naturalist. The redness on the stone at the bottom of the basin is also produced by a peculiar kind of moss, called by Linnæus, *Bissus jolithus*, or the violet-smelling. It causes any stone to which it adheres to have the appearance of being smeared with blood, and if rubbed, yields a smell like violets. Linnæus considers it serviceable in eruptive disorders.

The waters of this spring are indisputably endowed with every good quality attendant upon cold baths, and multitudes have, no doubt, experienced the good effects that thus result from natural qualities implanted in the several parts of matter by a kind and beneficent Providence. Dr. Linden, an able physician, speaks of this Well, in a work published by him, in 1748, on Chalybeate waters. He says, the green sweet-scented moss is frequently applied in cases of ulcer, with signal success, in the way of contracting and healing them; which powerful medicinal efficacy he supposes, may be ascribed to a vegetating spirit drawn from the water, for this water is clear of all gross earth, or mineral contents. Pennant says, that after very heavy rains, he has noticed the water assume a wheyish tinge.

The spring-head is a fine octagon basin, twenty-nine feet two inches in length, and twenty-seven feet four inches in breadth. An elegant and highly-ornamented dome covers the basin, rising eighteen feet above the spring, and supports a chapel. The present exquisite gothic building was erected by Henry the Seventh, and his mother, the Countess of Richmond and Derby. The ceiling is curiously carved, and ornamented with coats of arms and figures of Henry the Seventh, his mother, and the Earl of Derby. The water flows from the first into a second basin, which is uncovered. It is forty-two feet long, and about fifteen broad, with a handsome flagged walk round, with steps for bathers to descend into the water, as the great impetuosity of the spring-head, which is like a boiling caldron, prevents its being used as a bath.

The road from the Well to the sands is remarkably picturesque, winding along a little valley, bounded on

* Figured by PENNANT, in his *North Wales* vol I., quarto.

one side by hanging woods, beneath which the water hurries towards the sea, unless when interrupted by the numerous manufactories, which literally find in the stream the spring which sets them all in motion.

The resort of pilgrims to the fountain has of late years considerably decreased. In the Summer-season, a solitary individual may occasionally be seen in the water in deep devotion, offering up prayers to the saint, or performing a number of evolutions round the Well. But these are rare occurrences; it has long ceased to attract the rich and enlightened amongst the Roman Catholics. James the Second, who lost three kingdoms for a mass, paid a visit to this Well in 1686, and received as a reward, the under garment worn by his great-grand-mother, Mary, Queen of Scots, on the day of her execution.

The parish Church is contiguous to the Well; and, from being situated at the bottom of the hill, the bells cannot be heard in the town. When divine service is performed, a man is sent round the town with a bell, to summon the inhabitants to church,—the only walking steeple, we believe, in this country.

THE MONTH OF OCTOBER.

WITH symptoms of the year's decline
Mark'd by such deep and furrow'd line
That gathers on thy clouded face;
But not without thy proper grace,
Such grace as lights with placid gleams
The eyes of ancient men, and beams
In their meek smile, while on the head
The frost of hoary hairs is shed;
OCTOBER, we thy early day
Rejoice in, and desire its stay.
For, as in ancient men, the while
Appears that meek benignant smile,
The wrinkles on the furrow'd cheek,
Inveterate signals, still bespeak
What is the next approaching stage
Of their eventful pilgrimage;
So well we know thy present state
What darker prospects soon await;
And ev'n as thou dost first appear,
Fain would we have thee linger here,
Nor change thy mild and pleasant day
For signs of more confirm'd decay.
What though the chill and frosty morn,
Late of its fair proportion shorn;
The hasty twilight, that bereaves
Of their full length the darkening eyes;
The lengthening nights, that now assume
More than their equal share of gloom;
Mind us of charms, alas! gone by,
And haply wake a longing sigh:
Yet much, when once is spent and past
The tempest's equinoctial blast,
While yet the radiant noons retain
Signs of fair Autumn's mellow reign.
Ere yet the deepening shadows near
Of dark November's form appear;
With much is calm OCTOBER fraught,
To prompt the sadly-pleasing thought;
With much, enjoyment's better part
To store the mind, and mend the heart;
If objects, which the sense amuse,
Give cause for more exalted views,
And forms of earth be made to bear
Stamps of a heavenly character.

[BISHOP MANT'S *British Months*.]

It is recorded of some eastern monarch, that he kept an officer in his house, whose employment it was to remind him of his mortality, by calling out every morning at a stated hour, *Remember, prince, that thou shalt die*. And the contemplation of the frailness and uncertainty of our present state appeared of so much importance to Solon of Athens, that he left this precept to future ages; *Keep thine eye fixed upon the end of life*.—*Rambler*

FILIAL PIETY.

THE following passage, from a discourse by Dr. Ogden, must be familiar to many of our readers, but it is one which imparts fresh pleasure on repetition, and by the young it cannot be read too often *for their own sakes*. The sermon in question is a memorable one, from the anecdote connected with it, and which we shall now relate.

It is said that when Dr. Ogden had returned home, after pronouncing this discourse, he was followed by a young student of the University, who had been one of his auditors, and who, having gained admittance to his presence, cast himself on his knees before him, confessing the utter recklessness of his course of life, his deep ingratitude towards excellent parents, and his horror at the retrospect of his own misdeeds, which must have occasioned so much misery to his family; at the same time, expressing his thankfulness for that awakening lecture, which had raised a spirit of contrition within his soul, which would never let him rest till he had done his utmost to repair the evils of his past conduct, and effect a reconciliation with his heavenly as well as with his earthly Father*.

Stop, young man, we beg, a little, to look towards thy poor parents; think it not too much to bestow a moment's reflection on those who never forget thee; recollect what they have done for thee; remember all—all indeed thou canst not. Alas! ill had been thy lot, had not their care of thee begun before thou couldst remember or know any thing.

Now so proud, self-willed, inexorable, thou couldst then only ask by wailing, and move them with thy tears, and they were moved. Their hearts were touched with thy distress; they relieved and watched thy wants, before thou knewest thine own necessities or their kindness. They clothed thee; thou knewest not that thou wast naked; thou askedst not for bread, but they fed thee; and ever since, in short (for the particulars are too many to be recounted, and too many surely to be all utterly forgotten,) it has been the very principal endeavour, employment, and study of their lives to do service to thee.

And remember, (for this too is of moment,) it is all out of pure unfeigned affection. Other friends mostly expect their civilities to be repaid, and their kind offices returned with interest; but parents have no thoughts like these; they 'seek not thine but thee.' Their regard is real, and hearty, and undesigning; they have no reflex views on themselves, no oblique glances towards their own interest. If by all their endeavours they can obtain their child's welfare, they arrive at the full accomplishment of their wishes, they have no higher object of their ambition;—be thou but happy, and they are so.

And now, tell me, is not something to be done, I do not now say for thyself but for them? If it be too much to desire of thee to be good, and wise, and virtuous, and happy, for thy own sake, yet be happy for theirs. Think that a sober, upright, and, let me add, a religious life, besides the blessings it will bring on thy own head, will be a fountain of unfailing comfort to thy declining parents, and make the heart of the aged sing for joy.

What shall we say? Which of these is the happier? The son that maketh a glad father, or the father blessed with such a son?

Fortunate young man! who hast a heart open so early to virtuous delights, and canst find thy own happiness in returning thy father's blessing on his own head. And happy father! whose years have been prolonged, not, as it often happens, to see his comforts fall from him one after another, and to become at once old and destitute, but to taste a new pleasure, not to be found among the pleasures of youth, reserved for his age; to reap the harvest of all his cares and labour in the duty, affection, and felicity of his dear child. His very look bespeaks the inward satisfaction of his heart. The infirmities of age sit light upon him; he feels not the troubles of life; he smiles at the approach of death; sees himself still living and honoured in the memory and the person of his son, his other dearer self, and passes down to the receptacle of all the living in the fulness of content and joy.

H. M.

* Hughes's Memoirs of Dr. Ogden.

NEWSPAPER LITERATURE.

No. VIII.

WE now proceed to consider the nature and uses of Provincial Journals; and in what respects they differ from those newspapers of which we have been hitherto treating. In the first place, the limited sphere of operation assigned to the former, forbids any approach to the enormous outlay required by the latter: nor is this at all necessary, since the reflected light which the more humble country journal may borrow from its London congener, is of equal utility, and commonly possesses as much originality to those for whose reading it is intended, as if drawn from exclusive sources.

A very large proportion of the rural population are necessarily debarred from all opportunity of seeing the London newspapers, notwithstanding the facility of transmission enjoyed, under the regulation which permits their unlimited circulation, free of postage. Not only are the middle and humbler classes, who reside in places remote from the metropolis, or from large cities, completely shut out from the amusement, and often useful information, which the daily journals afford, but even many of the country gentry do not care to expend so large a sum to gratify their curiosity, as the charge for a daily paper amounts to. All these persons, then, find a complete substitute for the London press in their local journals; which, when properly conducted, not only present them with a perfect, though condensed, *resumé* of the week's news, foreign and domestic, but have the additional attraction of a copious detail of those local events which are especially calculated to interest them. Their numerous other advantages, as a means of local communication, for announcements, in trade, &c., are too obvious to need recapitulation. But it frequently happens, that newspapers of this description are conducted on a scale so extremely narrow, and that the profits are so limited, that they will not afford the application to their pages of more talent than is afforded in the spare hours of some intelligent tradesman, who combines the speculation with many other avocations. Even in such cases, however, a country newspaper may be far from uninteresting to those for whom it is compiled.

Much may be done towards enriching its columns if the resident gentry will occasionally contribute to the enlightenment of those around them, and to the mutual amusement of each other, by employing their pens in its service. We would not shock their feelings of self-esteem, by recommending to them to appear in the character of newspaper writers: this is not at all necessary: indeed, judging by what has fallen under our own observation, we should rather maintain, that contributions of this nature often excite greater attention, and possess greater weight, when their author is unknown. But we assert, that it is an office of which the highest and noblest need not be ashamed, to endeavour to convey to their neighbours or dependants lessons of sound and wholesome import, touching the social duties of life.

Where this plan is pursued—as it has been, in some instances—country newspapers occasionally rival the best of their London contemporaries in the depth and brilliancy of their original essays, and in the enlightened and extended views of complicated questions which they afford. It is too much to expect that the provincial journalist, amidst the laborious and multifarious occupations which engage his time and attention, can enter into the research necessary for presenting to his readers original and sound suggestions upon important subjects; while, on the other hand, his limited profits will not allow of the

employment of men of talent to assist him. In such case, it is most desirable that those who feel an interest in their native county or district, and have leisure for the purpose, should consider the local organs of communication established amongst them, as a joint-stock fund of information, from which, if each contribute with a liberal hand, an ample return will be made to them; not only in the satisfaction they will experience, in witnessing the beneficial effects of their labours on those around them, but also in the amusement which will flow back to themselves, from others, amongst their own circle, emulating their example.

Having thus far attempted to place before our readers a description of the present state of the newspaper press, we will now offer a few observations on the probable advantages or inconveniences that might be anticipated to arise from the removal of the stamp-duty, and of the other restrictions imposed upon newspapers; and the consequent extension of this description of publication.

From the statements we have already given, it will be seen that the production of a London daily newspaper, in its present improved state, is a work only to be effected by the union of great and varied talent, and the employment of an enormous amount of capital. It is important, to a right consideration of our subject, to keep the London press in view, as so large a portion of the more valuable contents of the provincial and other weekly journals are derived from this source; and in the absence of such a supply, it cannot be denied that the provincial journalist would be sadly at fault. Any measure, therefore, that would operate to weaken or undermine these gigantic establishments, would necessarily affect the character of the entire newspaper press throughout the kingdom. And (we may ask, without overstepping the bounds prescribed in the *Saturday Magazine*), would it be reasonable to expect, from the numerous petty concocters of newspapers who would start into existence on the removal of the stamp duty, and the other securities now required from newspaper proprietors, those exertions which are now witnessed in the extensive establishments just referred to? And, would it not be equally unreasonable to suppose that these could PERMANENTLY maintain their ground, on their present scale, if the support and patronage which they now enjoy were frittered away amongst a hundred competitors? But the truth is, that the *honest* projectors of unstamped newspapers actually propose to derive the entire contents of their publications from the leading stamped journals*.

Although such a flagitious scheme is only calculated, at the first view, to excite disgust; yet it is also useful, as evidencing that these parties did not attempt to promise that they could incur the expenses of a proper newspaper-establishment at the reduced price they put forth. It may be answered, that we are arguing upon a contemplated breach of the law, and that the case would be widely different if the field were thrown open to all for honourable competition. To this we shall reply (having in view the truism, that practical illustrations are far more satisfactory than theoretical conclusions), by exhibiting some of the workings of an unrestricted newspaper press in that country which derives its language and origin from our native land,—namely, the United States of North America.

* In one of their prospectuses (which was forwarded to the writer of these remarks, in common with his brethren of the public press, with a modest request that he would endeavour to promote its success), it was coolly proposed to publish daily a two-penny newspaper, which should contain everything of interest that had previously appeared in four of the principal London journals; and which, in fact, was to be a reprint of their columns, to be published within a few hours after the appearance of the originals!

[To be continued.]

EDUCATION OF THE BLIND.

IN the Edinburgh Asylum for the Blind there is an interesting old man named John M'Laren, who has now spent the long period of forty-six years in that Institution: and, when his character and extraordinary usefulness are considered, it is difficult to say whether he has most benefited by the Institution, or the Institution by him. He is a striking example, amongst many others in that house, of how much the blind may be made to do for themselves and their families, particularly when employed for life, as they are in the Edinburgh and Glasgow Asylums, instead of merely being taught in Schools, and, after a few years' tuition, sent out to do for themselves.

John was, I believe, born blind, or, what amounts to the same thing, became so a few days after his birth. His parents were poor, and how his earlier years were employed, I know not; but, by the time he had attained his fifteenth year (1792), the Asylum at Edinburgh was projected, and a very slender beginning having been made, John was amongst the few who entered it on its being opened. On this circumstance, the old man now dwells with peculiar pleasure. "I cam' in a bit callan' (a little boy), an' noo, ye see, am grown an auld man amang ye," he has many times observed to me, when chatting of years gone by,—and this he does with a peculiar elevation of the head, habitual to him when speaking of anything he deems important.

Like all his fellows in the Institution, he works nine hours a-day, principally at a machine for teasing hair, wool, and cotton,—a process which causes a great deal of dust, but of this I never heard John complain. When his day's work is over, he betakes himself to another employment, in a way which cannot be too much commended, and which has been of essential service to the interests of the Institution. After family worship (with which the day is begun and ended, all the inmates being present), he goes home and gets his cup of tea with "Kitty," his wife, and, at seven o'clock, invariably returns to assist the young people in committing to memory certain portions of the Scriptures, the *Metrical Version of the Psalms*, *Paraphrases (Hymns) of the Church of Scotland*, and the *Shorter Catechism*. This is his invariable practice five evenings of the week. Saturday afternoon is allowed to the whole of the people to enjoy themselves, and on the Lord's day none of them are at the Asylum.

John, like many other blind persons, is blessed with an excellent memory. This being observed by his companions soon after the Asylum opened, they considered that it would be a good thing to put him to an evening-school, for the purpose of storing his memory in such a way as would be useful to them all. They clubbed their pence, poor fellows, and John was accordingly sent to school; but he soon repaid them, for, by dint of application, he learnt by heart the greater part of the New Testament, large portions of the Old, and the other works before-mentioned. These he communicated to his friends as they could take up the passages from his repetition, a duty which he has continued during the long period which has elapsed since he was himself instructed.

There is one peculiarity in his teaching, namely, that he never will take in hand more than one pupil at a time. It has been more than once argued with him that the same repetition would do for one, or ten, or twenty. But no,—John does not comprehend such an innovation, and must be allowed to proceed in his own way. At seven o'clock, he searches about for the urchin whose "turn" it is that evening, (the

younger, and therefore, more unthinking portion, are not very fond of the engagement, but that is nothing to John), and having laid hands upon him, conducts him to the "Machine-room," the apartment where the old man and two others work during the day, and sitting down together, there they may be heard conning over the oft-repeated passage of Scripture, or verses of the Psalms.

This course is pursued in the face of a temptation which would put to the test the perseverance of most persons. At the very hour when John is employed as described, a "reading-party" is enjoying the delights of the popular journals, or some interesting work in biography, history, or travels. This "reading" to the inmates, attendance on which is quite optional, is furnished by the liberality of the directors, who, many years ago, at the suggestion of their talented secretary, Robert Johnston, Esq., not only furnished them with a newspaper twice a week, but purchased for their use, a share in the Edinburgh Subscription-Library (of about twelve thousand volumes). The reader, one of the overseers, is also paid by the Asylum, and they have the use of a comfortable room, with fire and gas.

The blind "vote in" the book to be read, no restriction being laid upon them; and, when the humble station in life they occupy is considered, it will surprise many to learn that during the three years last past, the "evening-party" (for there is a "breakfast-hour" and a "dinner-hour" reading beside), have been engaged in reading *Robertson's America*, and *Charles the Fifth, The History of England*, *Basil Hall's Travels*, *History of Malta*, and some other works of that class. They are prepared for enjoying this delightful mode of spending their spare hours, by the admirable system of education introduced by Mr. Johnston, and carried on for many years by one totally blind*.

But, to return: none of these "readings" move John from his purpose of Scriptural instruction; he allows it all to pass by as a thing of nought. When he is absent, and that is rare indeed, it is to hear some evening sermon. He cares little about anything but his Bible. Upon subjects connected with that he is quite at home,—on almost every other subject comparatively uninformed. His memory, however, takes one singular direction; he picks up and stores in it—it may be supposed almost involuntarily—the merest trifles, and these he can refer to for years back with precision. A question arose as to which of two men came first into the Asylum, one of whom had died. John, as in all such cases, was applied to, and, without the least hesitation, he replied, "Ou sir, this was it;—David cam' in first, for he cam' in about eleven in the forenoon, an' William about twa in th' afternoon; an' it was an unco wat (wet) day, just seven years past the ninth o' last April!"

This is one of a hundred such registrations, which might be quoted. In the same way, he has chronicled all the texts from which the annual sermons for the Institution have been preached, the clergyman who officiated, the sums collected, to a halfpenny, and the state of the weather on the day the collection was made. So long as that mode of aiding the funds continued (for an annual examination has of late years been resorted to in lieu of the sermons), John was invariably mounted in the desk, to act as precentor, or clerk, in raising the tune. He has a good voice still,

* This consisted of spelling, grammar, writing on twine, arithmetic, and geography. The teacher died suddenly in 1834, and his place is now supplied by one of his pupils. Another pupil has been long employed in the Glasgow Asylum, and the others went to similar Institutions in the United States.

ad, every morning and evening, at family worship in the Institution, he performs in the same way*.

One source of great anxiety to John is the state of work in the Institution. He is always dull, and makes many observations and inquiries, when "it is slack;" but when a revival comes, which it always does about March, from that to October being the busiest period of the year, his spirits get up, and he works with all his energy. Some of his waggish companions, knowing his foible, frequently annoy him with pretended doubts as to the stability of the Institution.

The Asylum has for many years had the furnishing of the door-mats for the light-houses in Scotland. The order is generally received about the beginning of April, but, being later about three years ago, some of them put it into his head that there was to be no more of these orders, "as they had seen by the papers that a certain economical member of the legislature had been overhauling these spendthrifts,—the Scottish Light-house Commissioners,—an' so Johnnie, be assured, there's an end to our gude yearly orders!" The poor old man believed this, and every time he could get hold of the overseer as he perambulated the premises, his inquiry was,—"*Dinna be offended, sir, but hae ye heard ony thing o' th' order yet? Sure that mon might hae let that bit thing escape.*" His joy on hearing that the order had at length been received, was in proportion to his former depression.

One anecdote more, and I have done.—A distinguished party visiting the house, were accompanied by Professor ——— (of Edinburgh). The Professor knew John to be one of the "lions" of the Institution, and, wishing to exhibit him, asked him to repeat the *nineteenth* verse of the sixteenth chapter of Isaiah. John, with his usual elevation of the head, and evidently with a feeling that he could wish to spare the learned gentleman, replied,—"*Eh sir, I wud wi' pleasure, but there's only fourteen verses in it.*" It was quite evident, from the appearance of the querist, that the question was not put with the intention of catching John: and the Professor heartily joined in the laugh raised by the quaint manner in which the answer was given.

It is gratifying to have to add, that the directors, appreciating the merits of this extraordinary man, made him an annual allowance for his almost self-imposed labour in teaching, but he had been engaged in it for a long period ere it was known to them. In addition to this, he had a very handsome silver snuff-box presented to him, with a suitable inscription on it. This heir-loom John only exhibits on "field-days,"—namely, two or three anniversaries still celebrated in the Asylum. Of this token of approval John is justly proud, and on these grand occasions, it makes the circuit of the table, every one enjoying a pinch.

But John M'Laren is not altogether singular in the Edinburgh Asylum. There are among his companions, men who, during nearly the same period, have gained an honourable livelihood by their industry,—supporting wives and families (most of them having such before they were deprived of the blessing of sight) respectably, though necessarily on slender means, a credit to themselves, and the excellent Institution which has enabled them to do so. For in this Asylum they are not only taught a trade, but are

employed in it after they are taught, so long as they continue worthy of that employment. This admirable plan has been followed by the Asylum recently opened at Glasgow,—the directors of both Institutions thus studying no less the pecuniary interests of the charity, than the permanent and solid benefit of those under their care.

I cannot close this notice without remarking the contrast which this case presents to one recorded in a highly-popular publication in May, 1833, of "*Blind Alick of Stirling.*" Both men were born in like circumstances of extreme poverty,—both were noted for astonishing memories,—both exercised these memories on the same invaluable treasure—the Bible. But there the parallel ends. Unremitting industry, both in manual labour, and in communicating to others rising around him the words of salvation,—supporting himself and wife creditably by that industry; esteemed for his valuable qualities by those placed over him, as well as by his companions and fellow-workmen; distinguished no less for his scrupulous sobriety and respectable appearance on the Lord's-day. Mark the one case: while the other, we are told, becoming a kind of wonder, an object of mere curiosity, "lived an easy sort of mendicant life," as the account informs us, eking out a precarious livelihood by the charity (if such it could be called) of the curious visiter, spending his days in idleness, and, by the notice which recently appeared in the newspapers of his death (which happened about April last), not particularly distinguished for his temperate habits.

What an argument for Asylums for the Blind! Schools for their reception are increasing in number both at home and abroad, but it admits of great doubt as to the real practical benefit of these as compared with the Asylums in which they are employed.

York.

J. A.

THE ARABS AND THEIR HORSES.

WHEN Sir John Malcolm, British Envoy to Persia, returning from a mission, was encamped near Bagdad, an Arab rode a bright bay horse, of extraordinary shape and beauty, before his tent, till he attracted his notice. On being asked if he would sell him,—"*What would you give me?*" said he. "*It depends upon his age; I suppose he is past five?*" "*Guess again,*" was the reply. "*Four.*" "*Look at his mouth,*" said the Arab, with a smile. On examination, he was found rising three; this, from his size and perfect symmetry, greatly enhanced his value. The Envoy said, *I will give you fifty tomans*.* "*A little more, if you please,*" said the fellow, apparently entertained. "*Eighty!—a hundred!*" He shook his head and smiled. The offer came at last to two hundred tomans! "*Well,*" said the Arab, seemingly quite satisfied, "*you need not tempt me any further—it is of no use; you are a fine Elchee; you have fine horses, camels, and mules, and I am told you have loads of silver and gold: now,*" added he, "*you want my colt, but you shall not have him for all you have got.*" So saying, he rode off to the desert, whence he had come, and where he, no doubt, amused his brethren with an account of what had passed between him and the European Envoy.—*Sketches of Persia.*

* A Toman is a nominal coin nearly the value of a pound sterling.

THE known shortness of life, as it ought to moderate our passions, may likewise, with equal propriety, contract our designs. There is not time for the most forcible genius and most active industry to extend its efforts beyond a certain sphere. To project the conquest of the world is the madness of mighty princes; to hope for excellence in every science has been the folly of literary heroes, and both have found at last, that they have panted for a height of eminence denied to humanity, and have lost many opportunities of making themselves useful and happy, by a vain ambition of obtaining a species of honour, which the eternal laws of Providence have placed beyond the reach of man.—*Rambler.*

* Whenever the person who regularly conducts that duty happens to be absent, John never fails to do it for him,—opening with a short prayer, repeating a few verses of a psalm, then singing them; giving out two lines at a time, for the benefit of those who had them not by memory; then repeating a chapter, and closing with an excellent (but always extempore) prayer.

EASE OF MIND.

EASE of mind is incomparably the most valuable of all possessions—not the ease of indolence, but of action—the smoothness of the unruffled current, not of the stagnant pool. This possession is not the gift of fortune: the gifts of fortune frequently destroy it. It must be of our own acquiring, and is in a great measure within the reach of all who diligently seek after it. It does not depend upon the amount of our worldly possessions, but upon our mode of using them; not upon our ability to gratify our desires, but upon our regulation of them. It is essentially the result of our habits, which habits are entirely within our own control. To enjoy ease of mind, there must be a feeling that we are fulfilling our duties to the best of our power, otherwise we only sear, instead of satisfying our conscience. The possession of riches, or the pursuit of them, beyond the limits of moderation, are unfavourable to this state, because temperance in the use of worldly enjoyments is absolutely necessary to it, and then comes the responsibility of the application of our superfluity. How many men's ease must be destroyed by superabundance, who would have been happy with less temptation, or with the feeling that less was expected from them! The pursuit of riches for the sake of riches, unfits the mind for ease, by generating a perpetual restlessness and anxiety, and by exposing to continual disappointments; and the same may be said, even in a stronger degree, of an ambitious love of those worldly distinctions, which, neither in the pursuit nor in the possession, can confer any real enjoyment.

A steady advance by honest roads towards those things which are within our reach, without too arduous efforts, and which, being attained, are worth our having, should be the aim of all who have their fortune to make; whilst they who have had theirs made for them, should habituate themselves to temperance in their own enjoyments, and to active and discreet liberality towards others. They who diligently cultivate the habits necessary to attain ease of mind, place themselves almost above its disturbance. To the mortifications of disappointed ambition, they are not at all exposed, and to the crosses of adverse fortune very little, whilst unavoidable afflictions, in the well-constituted, soften rather than sour the mind, and cannot be said to destroy its ease. Like cypresses, they throw a shade over the current, but in no way disturb its smoothness. Strict and constant discipline can ensure ease of mind in poverty or privation, of which St. Paul has afforded a beautiful example in his own person. "I have learnt in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need." But it must not be forgotten, that in this discipline is included the fixed contemplation of things above. They of this world only, cannot expect to bear the afflictions of the world, as if they looked upon it as a mere state of preparation for another, which is the peculiar advantage possessed by the true Christian.

There is no book comparable to the New Testament for teaching that temper of mind, which is alone capable of ensuring a current of happiness, independent of external interruptions. It gives that tone, which prevents us from annoying, or feeling annoyance. It teaches us to bear all things, to hope all things, and to think no evil. How different such a state from that of those who bear nothing, hope nothing, and are ever thinking evil! In order to

derive full benefit from the doctrines of the New Testament, it is not sufficient to recur to them occasionally, but by daily attention to make them part of our system, so that the mind may become its own master, and as much as possible independent of everything without. Goldsmith says,

How small of all that human hearts endure,
That part, which laws or kings can cause or cure!
Still to ourselves in every place consigned
Our own felicity we make or find.

Shakspeare observes, "there is nothing, either good or bad, but thinking makes it so;" and Milton expresses it,

The mind is its own place, and in itself,
Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven.

In order to enjoy ease of mind in our intercourse with the world, we should introduce into our habits of business, punctuality, decision, the practice of being beforehand, despatch, and exactness; in our pleasures, harmlessness and moderation; and in all our dealings, perfect integrity and love of truth. Without these observances, we are never secure of ease, nor, indeed, taste it in its highest state. As in most other things, so here, people, in general, do not aim at more than mediocrity of attainment, and of course fall below their standard; whilst many are so busy in running after what should procure them ease, that they totally overlook the thing itself.—*The Original.*

USING OR ABUSING THE WORLD.

THE terms *using* the world, or *abusing* it, or, in other words, *Temperance* and *Excess*, are relative expressions, whose signification must be ascertained by the circumstances of the case. For what may be the strictest temperance in one man, may, nevertheless, become a great excess in another, and both the using this world, and the abusing it, must refer to the respective constitution, circumstance, age, or condition, of this or that particular individual.

Thus, for example, he who uses this world properly, and as a wise and good man ought to do, is he who adjusts his enjoyments by the following standard, namely, First, When his expenses are brought within his income. Secondly, When he makes a decent and adequate provision for his family and dependants. Thirdly, When he lays by for contingencies. Fourthly, When he obliges himself to be a good economist, in order to be the better able to provide for the necessities of the poor. Fifthly, When he indulges himself in no gratifications which may injure either the health of his body, or the faculties of his mind. And lastly, When in all his enjoyments, he has a regard to the influence he may have over others, so as to set them no bad or dangerous example.

Now whosoever will limit his pleasures, diversions, or expenses, by these regulations, he is not a luxurious but a temperate man. He doth not abuse the good things of Providence, but rightly uses them, according to the gracious design of the donor. Nay, were he to do less, were he to deny himself such gratifications as can be enjoyed compatibly with these rules, he would not fill the station, nor live up to the rank and character allotted for him. In short, he would be the *covetous man*, whom God abhorreth; a man, who, by not using the world enough, does not promote that circulation of labour and industry in it which he ought to do. He is, therefore, injurious to society by a *defect*, as the other is by an *excess*.—TUCKER.

THE BASS ROCK.

THE Bass is an abrupt insulated rock, or rather island, situated near the entrance to the Firth of Forth, and about two miles from the coast of East Lothian, in Scotland. It is famous for the immense number of water-fowl, particularly the Solan goose, (the gannet,) with which it abounds; the rock itself

is about a mile in circumference, and rises near four hundred feet in height from the water's edge. There is but one spot at which a landing can be effected, and this is on the side that faces the main land; formerly, this part of the rock was fortified, but at present the fortifications are dismantled. There is an extraordinary cavern or rather fissure in the rock, which penetrates through its whole substance, and at low water it can be passed through on foot.

The Bass, in former times, was the retreat of a hermit, it afterwards came into the possession of a family of the name Lander. In 1405, when it became necessary to send Prince James, afterwards James the First of Scotland, to France, to secure him against the machinations of the Duke of Albany, this rock afforded the exile a temporary place of refuge. After leaving this place, the unfortunate Prince was taken prisoner by the English while passing Flamborough-head, and remained in prison for nineteen years. After the restoration, the rock was purchased by government for the sum of four thousand pounds, and converted into a state-prison, and during the struggles of the Scotch against episcopacy, many of the most noted among the Covenanters were confined in this dreary spot.

It was the last part of Great Britain that submitted to the authority of William, Prince of Orange, after the expulsion of James the Seventh of Scotland and Second of England. The garrison for several months held out against the newly constituted authorities, and made many daring attacks upon them; this they effected by employing a boat which they could lower or raise at pleasure. They only gave up possession of the fortress on the failure of the supplies, which had, until then, been remitted them from France. The name of the officer who at this time headed the garrison, was David Blair, third son of Blair of Ardblair, who retired afterwards to France, where he died. Although the fortress is dismantled, the dungeons in which the Covenanters were confined still remain entire. About half way up

a grassy slope towards the peak, there is a small ruinous chapel, containing a baptismal font.

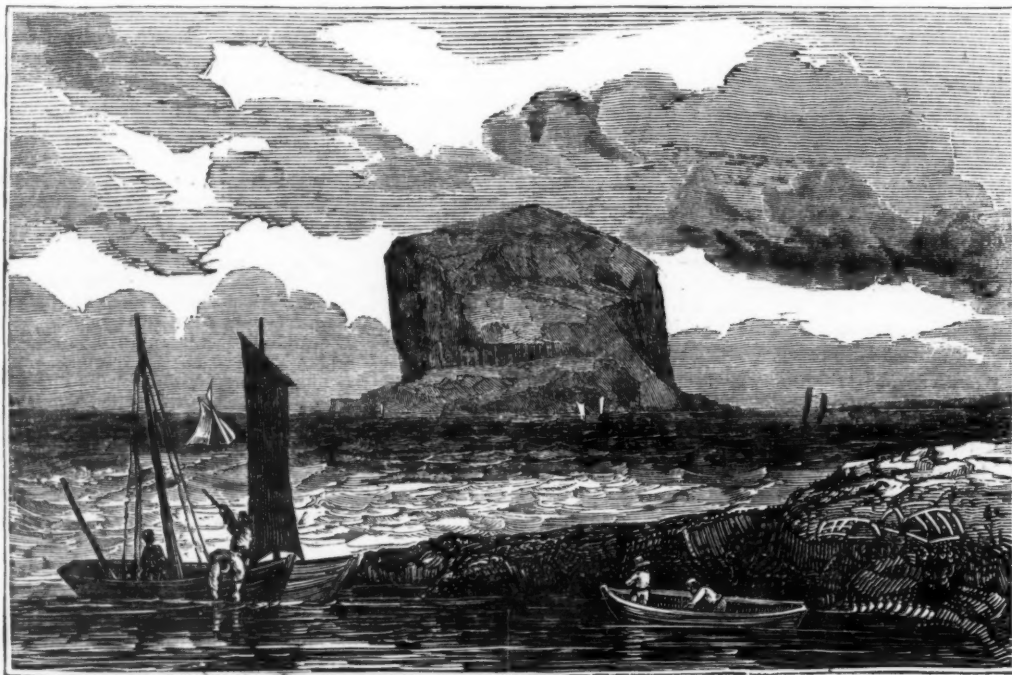
It is a singular fact, that the Solan geese, which are so numerous on this rock, are not found in any numbers on the eastern coast of Scotland, except at this place, at Ailsa Crag, and at St. Kilda. The rock is now let on lease to a tenant residing on the main land, who employs a number of hands, at proper seasons of the year, to collect the birds and eggs. The method of taking these animals is much the same as that employed at St. Kilda, and already described*.

Mr. Daniell, in his *Picturesque Tour round Great Britain*, says, "In the course of a season, about one thousand birds are taken,—they sell for ninepence each; the fat is used as cart-grease, and the feathers fetch a guinea per stone, Dutch, of twenty-two pounds."

The Kittiwakes (a species of gull,) are numerous here; their name seems to be derived from their peculiar cry, which sounds, however, as much like the words *get away* as any other. The clamour of these, and a variety of other sea-fowl that inhabit the rock, is absolutely deafening. However strange the remark may seem, yet the birds are in fact kept under lock and key, the islet being accessible only in one place, which has a gate secured by these fastenings. There is something paradoxical, and even absurd, in the notion, that a man should be privileged to call the thousands, and tens of thousands, of Solan geese, that freely wing the air in this region, *his own*; yet, as they are attached to this single spot, they are, to all intents and purposes, as much private property as the live stock on a farm. The proprietor of the rock pays annually twelve geese to the church of North Berwick, as part of the minister's stipend.

The grassy part on the top of the rock affords food to about twenty sheep; these are in great request among the epicures, on account of their delicate flavour.

* See *Saturday Magazine*, Vol. II., p. 228.



THE BASS ROCK.